

The SPEAKER. The Chair would like all Members to be on notice that the Chair intends to strictly enforce time limitations on debate. Furthermore, the Chair has the authority to immediately interrupt Members in debate who transgress rule XVII by failing to avoid "personalities" in debate with respect to references to the Senate, the President, and other Members, rather than wait for Members to complete their remarks.

Finally, it is not in order to speak disrespectfully of the Speaker; and under the precedents the sanctions for such violations transcend the ordinary requirements for timeliness of challenges. This separate treatment is recorded in volume 2 of Hinds' Precedents, at section 1248 and was reiterated on January 19, 1995.

6. CONDUCT OF VOTES BY ELECTRONIC DEVICE

The Speaker's policy announced on January 4, 1995, will continue through the 107th Congress.

The SPEAKER. The Chair wishes to enunciate a clear policy with respect to the conduct of electronic votes.

As Members are aware, clause 2(a) of rule XX provides that Members shall have not less than 15 minutes in which to answer an ordinary [rollcall] record vote or quorum call. The rule obviously establishes 15 minutes as a minimum. Still, with the cooperation of the Members, a vote can easily be completed in that time. The events of October 30, 1991, stand out as proof of this point. On that occasion, the House was considering a bill in the Committee of the Whole under a special rule that placed an overall time limit on the amendment process, including the time consumed by [rollcalls] record votes. The Chair announced, and then strictly enforced, a policy of closing electronic votes as soon as possible after the guaranteed period of 15 minutes. Members appreciated and cooperated with the Chair's enforcement of the policy on that occasion.

The Chair desires that the example of October 30, 1991, be made the regular practice of the House. To that end, the Chair enlists the assistance of all Members in avoiding the unnecessary loss of time in conducting the business of the House. The Chair encourages all Members to depart for the Chamber promptly upon the appropriate bell and light signal. As in recent Congresses, the cloakrooms should not forward to the Chair requests to hold a vote by electronic device, but should simply apprise inquiring Members of the time remaining on the voting clock.

Although no occupant of the Chair would prevent a Member who is in the well of the Chamber before the announcement of the result from casting his or her vote, each occupant of the Chair will have the full support of the Speaker in striving to close each electronic vote at the earliest opportunity. Members should not rely on signals relayed from outside the Chamber to assume that votes will be held open until they arrive in the Chamber.

7. USE OF HANDOUTS ON HOUSE FLOOR

The Speaker's policy announced on September 27, 1995, will continue through 107th Congress.

The SPEAKER. A recent misuse of handouts on the floor of the House has been called to the attention of the Chair and the House. At the bipartisan request of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the Chair announces that all handouts distributed on or adjacent to the House floor by Members during House proceedings must bear the name of the Member authorizing their distribution. In addition, the content of those materials

must comport with standards of propriety applicable to words spoken in debate or inserted in the Record. Failure to comply with this admonition may constitute a breach of decorum and may give rise to a question of privilege.

The Chair would also remind Members that, pursuant to clause 5 of rule IV, staff are prohibited from engaging in efforts in the Hall of the House or rooms leading thereto to influence Members with regard to the legislation being amended. Staff cannot distribute handouts.

In order to enhance the quality of debate in the House, the Chair would ask Members to minimize the use of handouts.

8. USE OF PERSONAL, ELECTRONIC OFFICE EQUIPMENT ON HOUSE FLOOR

The Speaker's policy announced on January 27, 2000, will continue through the 107th Congress.

The SPEAKER. The Chair would like to take this occasion to remind all Members and staff of the absolute prohibition contained in the last sentence of clause 5 of rule XVII against the use of any personal electronic office equipment, including cellular phones and computers, upon the floor of the House at any time.

The Chair requests all Members and staff wishing to receive or send cellular telephone messages to do so outside of the Chamber, and to deactivate, which means to turn off, any audible ring of cellular phones before entering the Chamber. To this end, the Chair insists upon the cooperation of all Members and staff and instructs the Sergeant-at-Arms, pursuant to Clause 3(a) of rule II, to enforce this prohibition.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of 40 United States Code, 175 and 176, the Chair, without objection, announces the Speaker's appointment of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) as members of the House Office Building Commission to serve with the Speaker.

There was no objection.

ON THE BEGINNING OF THE 107TH CONGRESS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, today we begin the 107th Congress, and much work lies ahead of us. It is my hope that we will be able to join together to do the work of the American people who have entrusted us to do just that. The American people want a government which rises above partisan bickering and makes a real commitment to empowering individuals and communities. Our parents, teachers, and schools need the ability and resources to make their own decisions on educating America's children so that no child is left behind and every child has the chance to succeed.

Madam Speaker, this Congress must also work to ensure that every American has access to affordable and quality health care. And this Congress should grant the hardworking people of America real relief from overbearing tax burdens they currently face, starting with the elimination of the marriage penalty tax and the death tax.

I am confident that we will rise to these challenges and pass responsible legislation which will meet the needs of not only Nevadans but every American.

CONGRATULATING GALE NORTON ON HER NOMINATION AS SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Madam Speaker, I would like to welcome everyone back and also to congratulate the Governor of Texas, the President-elect of the United States, not only for inspiring and earning the confidence of the country but in particular for the selection and nomination announcement early on about the Secretary of the Interior. Gale Norton, from Colorado, is the past attorney general for the great State of Colorado; and I am thoroughly excited and convinced that our colleagues, Madam Speaker, will be thrilled as well with the skill, expertise and attributes that Gale Norton will bring to the office of Secretary of the Interior. Her record in the State of Colorado is one that is clearly in the best interests of maintaining the integrity of our environment and doing so in a way that honors and respects western values and realizes the integral link between economic livelihoods of Westerners and also the maintenance and preservation of our most precious natural resources.

It is going to be an exciting time for us to work closely with the Department of the Interior under that new leadership, and I am anxious to move ahead and look forward to working hard with the new secretary.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

INTRODUCTION OF THE KEEP OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S MILITARY RETIREES ACT IN 107TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHOWS. Madam Speaker, today the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) and I are introducing the Keep